ture, it is necessary to possess knowledge, good will and sacrifice on all sides."

Another reason why students watch experiments in Czechoslovakia with more hope than they view those in countries like Russia is the enlightenment of the people.

Prior to the recent war, Bohemia ranked as the most literate of realms. Fewer than one per cent of the adult population was unable to read or write.

The University of Prague is the second oldest in Europe. The people have been noted for centuries for achievements in literature and art. Every Protestant knows of John Huss, the father of the Reformation and in the annals of philosophy and pedagogy few names rank higher than that of Commenius, the Bohemian. And of course every music lover is familiar with the compositions of Dvorak, who spent the best part of his career in America.

While the Slovaks have some of the backwardness of mountain and highland peoples, they are much more enlightened and progressive than many other Slav peoples. President Masaryk himself is a Slovak by birth, as was General Stefanik, the famous astronomer who became a World War hero on the Allied side, on which thousands of Czechs and Slovaks fought against their dynastic rulers.

"The territory of Czechoslovakia comprises about 55,000 square miles," says Jan Masaryk, its diplomatic representative in America. "That is we have about the same area as the state of New York.

"Our natural resources are immense and of great variety. We have most of the minerals, including iron and coal, in abundance. The greater part of the industrial and agricultural exports from the old dual monarchy of Austria-Hungary came from what is now Czechoslovakia, where lie the best agricultural as well as the finest industrial centers of the old empire.

"As soon as pre-war economic conditions are restored, we will be fully self-sustaining, with much to spare. Food conditions are already in fair shape. The best crop in forty years is almost ready to harvest. The activities of our people are almost evenly divided between manufactures and agriculture, which makes for sane economic and social life. There are 4,500,000 spindles in our textile industry, and we should consume not less than 750,000 bales of your cotton each year. Our business with America will necessarily be large.

"The government is thoroughly democratic and will so remain, for the Czechoslovaks are by nature democratic. In a political sense, we are endeavoring in a way to establish in Central Europe a little America, where men will enjoy political and religious liberty and all stand equal before the law; and I believe we are succeeding."

"Czechoslovakia is politically the healthiest and sanest spot in Europe," says Charles R. Crane who knows the country intimately, his son being American minister there.

There is perhaps no country where industries are more varied. Home industries prevail as perhaps nowhere else in Europe except maybe in Switzerland. It includes laces and toys and cheap jewelry, for which, I was surprised to learn, Prague is the world center.

They have a substantial automobile industry, now focused chiefly on farm tractors because of the horse shortage due to the war; a great porcelain and large paper industries.

And though the information may now lack interest, the world's best beer used to be made in Bohemia, which gave to beerdom the names of both Pilsner and Budweiser.

In the mountainous regions of both Bohemia and Slovakia there are many watering places that have drawn or may draw travelers from all the world. Carlsbad is the best known.

The country is isolated from the sea, being like Switzerland without a coast. However, barges may be loaded from quays in Prague and floated direct to Bremen, where the republic has shipping rights.

There are many thousands of both Czechs and Slovaks in America. Their support of their people's ancient fight for freedom, made, in large part, the efforts of Professor Masaryk and Dr. Benes, and other expatriated leaders, successful in securing, long before the Great War ended, the assurance of the Entente Allies that Czechoslovakia would be guaranteed its proper place in the world's political sun.

(C) Harris & Ewing

Czechoslovak Legation, in Washington, D. C.

The Origin of Sports—Polo

By FRANK DORRANCE HOPLEY

POLO is one of the oldest of games, in fact, the claim has often been made that it is the very oldest. The record of it goes back to the year 600 B. C., and it appears to have been of Persian origin. In the "Tale of the Wazir and Sage Duban" is given what purports to be the story of the first game of polo that was ever played.

A king called Yunan reigned over the city of Fars in the land of Roum. This king was afflicted with leprosy, which none of his physicians was able to cure. The Sage Duban finally arrived on the scene and declared to the king that he could cure him and that "he would give neither potion to drug nor ointment to annoint him with." The king consented to the trial, and the story goes that: "The Sage set to work choosing the fittest drugs and simples, and he fashioned a bat, hollow within, and furnished with a handle without, for which he made a ball. When all was complete he went before the king, and handing him the bat, said, 'Take this mall and grasp it as I do, So! Now push for the plain, and leaning well over thy horse, drive the ball with all they might until thy palm be moist and thy body perspire, then the medicine will penetrate through thy palm and will permeate thy person. When thou hast done with play and thou feelest the effects of the medicine, return to the palace and make the Ghusl ablution in the Hammam bath, and lie down to sleep, so shalt thou become whole'."

Yunan is credited with having followed instructions "until his hand waxed moist, and his skin perspiring, imbibed the medicine from the wood."

Mr. T. F. Dale, in his book, "The Game of Polo," traces the development of this game from the time of its inception to the present, in an interesting manner. He says:

"From the Persians the game passed to the Turks, thence by way of Thibet, Ladakh, and Kashmir to Manipur, where it was, and still is, a national sport. The first Englishmen to play the game were the indigo planters of Bengal, and in that district for some years the game stopped. Then, so far as can be gathered, the game was played in Bengal in an irregular fashion by the officers of a native cavalry regiment who used their chargers for the purpose. Indeed there is no trace of the game having been played among English officers until after the Mutiny. The Persians undoubtedly used horses for the game, nor was it until polo reached India that ponies were employed, and even these were probably used at first simply because the hill tribes possessed no horses. The fitness and adaptability of the pony for polo was practically an accidental discovery. To the Manipuris must be conceded the honor of being the immediate forerunners of the polo-players of today."

The literature on the subject of polo is very meager, but we learn from brief notes gathered here and there that the game was not introduced into England until in the early seventies, and then by some officers of the 10th Hussars, who were stationed at Shorncliffe, although this honor has been also claimed by the 9th Lancers. The horses were soon exchanged, however, for ponies and the billiard ball for the willow root ball, which has been used ever since.

To a certain Captain Herbert has been ascribed the honor of founding the first polo club in Great Britain. This was the Monmouthshire, in 1872.

The rise to favor of polo in England was rapid, and in 1878 the first Inter-Regimental Tournament was played and won by the 9th Lancers.

Captain Monson, who had been manager of Hurlingham since 1870, saw the possibilities of the game, and advised the club at that point to make a polo ground. This ground has become famous throughout the world to all lovers of polo. It is not, however, a perfect one, by any means. A polo ground should be rectangular, and the one at Hurlingham is egg-shaped, and what is, perhaps, even worse, there is a considerable fall toward the goal near the chestnuts. Some of the finest games of polo have been played, however, upon this beautiful ground surface, which is a perfect model of what the turf of a polo ground should be.

The Hurlingham rules and the Indian Polo Association rules are generally accepted as being the standard by which all polo games are played.

Mr. Dale says further:

"The only thing which, on looking back over the history of polo, it seems to lack is a poet. With the exception of two verses of Omar Khayyam the game has not stirred the imagination of the poet. Persian writers indeed allude to it, but polo has not yet found its Somerville, or at any rate, its Whyte Melville."

The game of polo is not an especially popular one in the United States, that is, it does not appeal to the masses; probably because of the expense entailed in playing it, the cost of the ponies and their keep. Among the "four hundred," however, it is played to a considerable extent, and polo matches, arranged between the members of various country clubs, are not infrequent.

Stories of Old Home Songs

My Old Kentucky Home

ONE of the best song writers America ever had was Stephen Collins Foster—also one of the most prolific, for he penned between one and two hundred. This famous Pennsylvanian created "My Old Kentucky Home" while he and his sister were visiting in the state with Judge Rowan who lived a short distance east of Bardstown.

Stephen and his sister went walking on a certain soul-thrilling morning. The Negroes were at work in the cornfields of the old plantation and the sun was shining gorgeously when the two young people sat down upon a bench. A mocking bird was merry-making in a tree while a thrush sent out wonderful notes from the bush that served as his stage. A number of pickaninnies were playing in and around a near-by shanty. With this as a setting Foster began to write the immortal words.

His sister read the first verse and then sang it. The mocking bird seemed to be enraptured for he drew his head to one side and descended to a lower bough of the tree. Did he think himself outdone?

In the meantime Stephen had written the chorus. When the last sweet note of his sister's voice had died away, he followed with his compelling deep bass.

The slaves put aside their tools and listened to the sentimental ditty. The old black women peeped around a corner of the house, and the children stopped their playing. A dog gave his attention. Even the leaves seemed to cease their rustling. The wonderful stillness was not broken until the brother and sister blended their voices in singing, "They hunt no more for the possum and the coon," and the entire second and third stanzas.

As the pair finished the song, the cheeks of the black faces became wet with tears. The children acted as if a spell had been cast upon them. The mocking bird and the thrush vanished into the thicket. The old dog lay down to bask in the sun.

Though this story of the origin of "My Old Kentucky Home" has been told at various times, it seems too good to be true. At least, songs are not written in that fashion in this day and age of the world. A modern poet revises and polishes his work; if he wishes to make a song out of it and is a musician himself, he then hums the words over and over until he gets a melody. Sometimes a writer-composer will work the other way around, from the music to the words; but Foster liked to do the lyric first. It is entirely possible, however, that he may have written the air of "My Old Kentucky Home" before he penned the words; he may have discussed the whole matter with his sister, for otherwise she could scarcely break out in full song as the words were set down.

On the day that John Adams and Thomas Jefferson died Stephen Collins Foster was born at Pittsburgh. This remarkable day was the Fourth of July, 1826, just half a century after the Declaration of Independence.

The boy quickly qualified as a musician; in fact, he attained this goal almost before he graduated from the cradle. He required no teacher, for at the age of seven he mastered the flageolet himself. Soon every instrument yielded its sweetness to him. Stephen differed from his mates. Running and jumping did not appeal to him half as much as composing songs with the words and music complete. With his boyhood largely spent in this fashion, his success as a song writer did not surprise those persons who really knew Stephen Collins Foster.

His first published song, "Open Thy Lattice, Love," appeared in 1842 when he was a bookkeeper for his brother in Cincinnati. He followed this up a few months later with "O, Susanna" which a minstrel troupe featured. As these productions became popular almost overnight, he quit his job and turned his attention toward the field of endeavor that was his true heart's love.

Foster also studied French and painting. Once he attempted to illustrate a pathetic song—but never again! He handed his sketch and the manuscript to his publisher who gave it a glance and commented, "Oh, another comic song, Mr. Foster!" The sensitive would-be artist thereupon tore up the drawing; nor could any one ever persuade him to make another effort.

The author of "My Old Kentucky Home," "Old Folks at Home," and "Old Black Joe," sailed smoothly and serenely on his way until he entered the sea of matrimony in 1854. Leaving his wife after six years, he went to New York City to live. There he kept a small grocery, but he squandered both his earnings and himself. There in 1864 he died—poverty-stricken and a victim of his own dissolute habits.

The man was not a great musician; he often regretted that he had not in his youth studied the masters. The success of his compositions may be ascribed to the undeniable fact that they appeal directly to the human heart.

"Foster," says L. C. Elson, "was like Robert Burns, a man who sang the purest poetry of humble life."

His career resembles that of the Scotchman as both were lovers of pleasure, too fond of drink, and unusually gifted. Like Edgar Allen Poe, his life was unfortunate; like that American genius, his talents were not appreciated until long after his death.